CRAWLING HEAD

A massive head, once belonging to a towering giant, brought low and infused with necrotic magic. An unsightly mess of organs and meaty tendrils sprout from the creature's neck, propelling the undead terror forward on its gruesome path.

PRIDE'S REWARD. The crawling head is an abomination that spits in the face of all that is good in the world. The first of these horrific creatures was created by an overzealous necromancer who was dabbling in magic he did not have the means to control. He successfully animated the severed giant head, hoping to use it as a conduit to the realm of the dead. Instead, the creature killed him, and his severed head became the first of many that would know the true horror of being trapped within his creation. Since then, other crawling heads have cropped up in regions where giants are frequently present, suggesting that they are somehow propagating.

FOUL SAGES. Unlike most undead creatures, crawling heads are very intelligent, and they have a mind of their own. They enjoy collecting knowledge by severing the heads of mortal creatures and slowly picking their way through all the knowledge possessed by them. By combining spells like speak with dead and detect thoughts, they are able to slowly absorb everything a creature knew in life. They are greedy when it comes to the acquisition of knowledge and rarely give up their secrets unless coerced or offered something worth their while.

Crawling Head

Huge Undead, Chaotic Evil

AC 14 (natural armor) **Initiative** -2 (8)
Hit Points 340 (32d12 + 132)
Speed 20 ft., climb 20 ft.

	MOD	SAVE		MOD	SAVE		MOD	SAVE
STR 27	+8	+8	**DEX** 7	-2	-2	**CON** 18	+4	+4
INT 20	+5	+5	**WIS** 18	+4	+4	**CHA** 22	+6	+6

Skills Arcana +11, Perception +10, Religion +11
Immunities Lightning, Poison, Poisoned, Thunder
Resistances Necrotic
Senses Truesight 60 ft., Darkvision 60 ft., Passive Perception 20
Languages Common, Giant
Challenge 18 (XP 20,000; PB +6)

Traits

Cacophony. When the crawling head makes an attack roll, if it has at least 10 heads stored in its body, all creatures within 60 feet of it that can hear must succeed on a DC 18 Wisdom Saving Throw or be Frightened of the crawling head until the start of its next turn.

Cranium Collector. A crawling head can store up to 30 severed heads inside its body at once. When it absorbs a head to fuel one of its abilities, the head is utterly destroyed. A crawling head typically has 1d6+8 heads stored in its body.

Actions

Multiattack. The crawling head makes an attack with its vorpal bite, and two attacks with its tendrils.

Vorpal Bite *Melee Attack Roll:* +14 to hit, reach 5 ft. *Hit:* 24 (3d10 + 8) Slashing damage. On a roll of 19 or 20 this attack is a critical hit. On a critical hit, if the target is large or smaller, the target's head is severed from its body. The creature dies if it can't survive without the lost head. The severed head is then stored inside the crawling head's body. A creature is immune to this effect if it is immune to slashing damage, or it doesn't have or need a head.

Tendrils. *Melee Attack Roll:* +14 to hit, reach 15 ft. *Hit:* 17 (2d8 + 8) Bludgeoning damage and the target is Grappled (escape DC 18).

Spellcasting. The crawling head's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 20, +12 to hit with spell attacks). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

• At will: *Animate Dead*, *Detect Thoughts*, *Inflict Wounds, Gentle Repose, Speak With Dead*
• 3/day each: *Create Undead, Fear, Shield*
• 1/day each: *Finger of Death*

Bonus Actions

Gruesome Quicken. The crawling head absorbs one of the heads it has stored in its body. It then casts a spell with a casting time of one action.

Reactions

Psychic Backlash. *Trigger*: A creature tries to read the crawling head's thoughts. *Response*: The crawling head unleashes a cacophony of psychic screams in the mind of the creature dealing 1d6 psychic damage per head stored in its body.

Legendary Actions

The crawling head can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The crawling head regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

Constrict. The crawling head deals 7 (2d6) bludgeoning damage to a creature grappled by it.

Regenerate. The crawling head absorbs one of the heads stored in its body and regains 13 (3d8) Hit Points.

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